

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

The applicant thanks Examiner Vanaman for the helpful interview which was granted applicant's attorney. The present response is made pursuant to the results of the interview.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7 and 17 have been amended solely to deal with objections and 112 rejections. As regards the amendment to claim 1, the examiner is correct that the expression "direct coaxial connection" was meant to refer to the first driving position described in the preceding paragraph of the claim, and the claim has been amended to reflect that fact.

As regards the rejection of claim 1 based upon Cragg, it is believed that claim 1 has been misinterpreted, because it does not read on the apparatus disclosed by Cragg.

In that regard, it was pointed out in the interview that claim 1 recites in the penultimate paragraph thereof that in the first driving position, the input shaft rotates "about a common axis" with one of the gear wheels. The only "gear wheels" recited in the claim are "at least two gear wheels which are permanently meshed with the toothed wheel." No other "gear wheels" are recited in the claim, so the language set forth in the penultimate paragraph clearly means that the input shaft rotates about a common axis with a gear wheel that is permanently meshed with the toothed wheel.

According to the Official Action, the shaft 57 of Cragg is considered to correspond to the claimed input shaft, and the gear wheels 71, 75 (i.e., more specifically, 70, 75?) are considered to be constantly meshed with the toothed wheel 40. Applicants do not disagree. However, Fig. 5 of Cragg shows that the input shaft

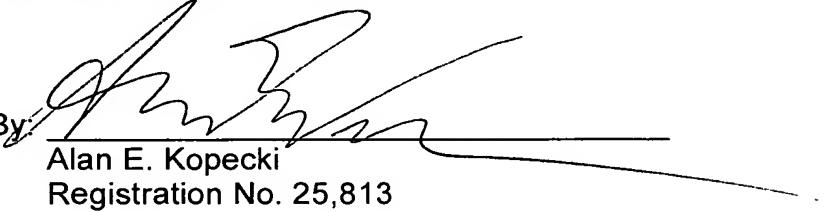
57 rotates on an axis which is parallel to the respective axes of the gear wheels 70 and 75 and thus could never rotate on a common axis with either of the gear wheels 70, 75 as recited in claim 1.

During the interview, the Examiner expressed the opinion that the claim could be broadly read to support the interpretation which was made in the Official action to reject claim 1.

Nevertheless, it was agreed that if claim 1 were amended to recite that the "common axis" were the axis of the input shaft, claim 1 would distinguish patentably over Cragg. Claim 1 has been so amended, so it is submitted that claim 1 cannot be considered as literally readable on Cragg, and allowance of that claim, along with the remaining claims, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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